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The nose
knows

Old artist, new media



With China's recording industry in disarray, musician and pop composer Guo Feng is returning to his roots in oil painting to express himself through a new audio-visual experience.

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Modern art in classic form

Even after studying contemporary art at college, Liu Jianhua feels most comfortable creating in the classic medium of porcelain.



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Faces from the border

Bai Junjiang follows mixed members of China's Russian ethnic minority on the search for Chinese ancestral homes.

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International standards encouraged on Standards Day

By Zhao Hongyi

The country has made great strides in adopting and promoting international standards since 2000, sources from the National Standardization Administration said.

To celebrate the 31st International Standards Day, the administration, together with the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine (GAQSIQ) and the Beijing Municipal Government, invited industrial experts and officials to sign agreements last Friday for further standardization in the capital.

Over the past 10 years, China formulated 1,677 standards to regulate agriculture seeds, industrial machinery and community management. International standards account for 76 of these new regulations; another 961 are national standards, 581 are industrial standards and



GAQSIQ officials visit to congratulate the country on its progress.

Photo provided by BQTS

59 are regional standards.

The high-voltage AC/DC transmission grid, one product of the standardization effort, facilitated rapid growth in the manufacturing industry. This comprehensive transmission system has helped China develop one of the most sophisticated grid networks in the world.

The connector between the main frame and screen of

Lenovo's ThinkPad computers was the most successful technology achievement after Lenovo acquired IBM's laptop business. It has become an international standard design in the computer industry.

The mobile phone operators and manufacturers in China created the TD-SCDMA technology system enabling 4G mobile phone operation and putting China ahead of the

world in mobile technology.

In agriculture, farmers have switched to using seeds bred in standardized methods. They have also adopted new standards in farm management, harvest and procession.

In Beijing's residential communities, management companies now follow standardized procedures for street sweeping, parking and elevator maintenance.

By 2020, China is expected to be a major power in design.

"This industry will also require standardization to ensure its quality as it connects with the rest of the world," Zhi Shuping, administrator of the General Administration of Quality Supervision and Inspection and Quarantine, said Friday.

Hong Feng, vice mayor of Beijing, pledged to pioneer the shaping of new standards for high-tech commodities and service industries.

In Zhongguancun, a major IT industry base, many companies are following Lenovo's lead and collaborating in Intelligent Grouping and Resource Sharing, a new system of shared computer connectors and accessories.

Zhao Changshan, director of the General Administration of Quality Supervision and Inspection and Quarantine Beijing Branch, called on people to accept and adopt standards in their daily life.

The presidents of world standard organizations, IEC (International Electrotechnical Commission), ISO (International Standardization Organization) and ITU (International Telecommunication Union) sent congratulatory messages to the event, urging China to take a leading role in the push for worldwide standards.

The campaign will continue through the end of November.

Lawyers hope bad marrow donors will face punishment

By Zhao Hongyi

Wang Mei (anonymous), a graduate of Qujin Medical Vocational School in Yunnan Province, registered as a bone marrow donor during a drive with other students. This May, she was matched to a male leukemia patient in Jiangsu Province.

On the morning of July 20, Wang went to the 2nd People's Hospital of Yunnan to have her marrow cells collected for the procedure. However, the hospital's equipment malfunctioned during the extraction and Wang refused to return and continue, effectively sentencing the recipient to death.

Her decision was widely criticized in the media, and many commentators said she should bear some of the legal responsibility for the patient's death.

China's bone marrow network has expanded rapidly over the past decade.

As the sole national center for marrow donation and transfer, the China Marrow Donor Program (CMDP) maintains a database of 1.32 million registered volunteers.

But more than 20 percent of the center's registered volunteers back out of their commitments when called on



More than 20 percent of the donors in the national database back out of their commitments. CFP Photo

to donate.

The problem of unwilling donors is not unique to China. Reports say that more than 50 percent of volunteers worldwide back out of their commitment due to pressure from their families.

Marrow donation, like blood donation, is a voluntary and free service in most countries, and all laws that exist are intended to protect the donor.

The National Marrow Donor Program in the US

emphasizes that marrow donation is voluntary and the donor has the right to withdraw at any time before marrow collection begins. Even the World Marrow Donor Association maintains this stance.

The problem is that shortly before the marrow extraction begins, the recipient is given an operation to purge his or her bones of marrow, effectively wiping out the immune system. After this point, the

patient will suffer seriously and die if the donor marrow does not arrive.

Most countries do not allow donors to withdraw once the patient has had this operation.

As with most things in China, there are no clear laws or regulations defining what responsibility, if any, a donor should bear for a patient's fate after choosing to withdraw after this point.

In 2006, the family of one

patient fielded a lawsuit against a donor who withdrew at the last minute. However, the court found that the donation was a non-binding agreement and threw out the case.

Xiang Lin, a scholar of law at Zhengzhou University, disagreed with the court's finding.

He has been urging the National People's Congress to begin work on marrow legislation that would mirror the country's regulations on blood donation. He also encouraged the marrow center to state in the agreement what responsibilities the donor should bear if the patient loses his or her life due to their refusal to participate.

He also said some fault rests with the hospital.

Wang Mei had already donated some of her marrow, and would have continued if the hospital's equipment hadn't broken down. She left intending to return to the hospital the next day, but was persuaded not to participate anymore by her mother.

Qiao Guohe, professor Xiang's colleague, urged more people to register for marrow donation to show legislators the need for regulation and compensation is urgent.

Cold-blooded bystanders enrage nation

By Han Manman

The fate of Yueyue, a two-year-old girl who was run over by two vehicles and left to die by 18 bystanders in Guangdong last Thursday, remains in limbo.

"Yueyue remains in a coma. Her condition is on the edge of brain death," said Wang Weimin, a doctor at the General Hospital of the Guangzhou Military Command of the People's Liberation Army.

Surveillance camera footage of the incident shows Yueyue walking into the path of a van outside her family's shop at a busy wholesale market in Foshan, Guangdong Province.

The van stuck the girl and paused briefly before continuing ahead and crushing Yueyue under its rear wheels.

As many as 18 people are shown in the footage to be ignoring Yueyue as she lies critically injured and bleeding on the road.

Several change their path to veer around her broken body.

As the video continues, a man on a scooter steers around the toddler and looks briefly at the girl before continuing down the street. A second van approaches and drives over Yueyue's legs.

A street cleaner, later identified as 58-year-old Chen Xianmei, came to the girl's aid and picked her up off the road. She was ignored by most of the shopkeepers when she called for help before tracking down the girl's mother.

Doctors said Yueyue suffered major head injuries and could breathe only with the assistance of a ventilator.

The highly distressing surveillance footage was uploaded to the popular Youku video sharing site and attracted more than a million views in a number of hours.

Both drivers who ran over the girl have been arrested, Xinhua said, but Internet users have decried the apathy of the people who left her to die.

Netizens also condemned the moral decay of society using the hash tag "Please end the indifference" in their microblog posts.

"My heart went cold when I saw the horrible video. Our society is seriously ill. Even cats and dogs shouldn't be treated so heartlessly," one netizen named Zhang Yu said.

On September 2, an 88-year-old man in central China collapsed, his face striking the pavement. When no one came to his aid, he ended up choking to death on blood from his own nose.

The few people who have attempted to help injured persons have been blamed for the injuries and subject to extortion.

In several cases, would-be good Samaritans were prosecuted after



Yueyue's condition is described "on the edge of brain death". CFP Photos



Yueyue's parents thank Chen Xianmei for stopping to help.

attempting to aid injured elderly people. Many were left with a large portion of the medical bills.

Many on the Internet are calling for a "good Samaritan law," which would provide legal protection to bystanders who come to the aid of a person in need.

A netizen from the UK who called himself Edward said most European countries have similar laws to protect people who provide reasonable and well-intentioned aid.

"This would improve the chance of getting assistance, while at the same time provide protection to those who want to help. As a country that claims to care about members of the community, China should consider implementing a similar law," he said.

The Guangdong provincial government is already attempting something similar.

According to *Southern Metropolis Daily*, the government is soliciting ideas through its microblog about how good Samaritans could be protected when they choose to assist those who are in danger.

"Please stop the coldness. Guangdong Province is going to hold a discussion to criticize the behavior of those who leave people in mortal danger out of indifference. We want to support those who would lend a helping hand. Your opinions could help shape our province's future laws," the message read.

QQ numbers not inheritable, Tencent says

By Chu Meng

The inheritance of virtual properties, such as social networking accounts, photos albums, videos and text messages, is a new question facing legislators in the digital age.

On Monday, a woman surnamed Wang in Shenyang, Liaoning Province contacted Tencent, owner of the popular QQ instant messaging software, to request access to her dead husband's QQ account number and password.

In the request, which she also published on her blog, she said the account contained two photo albums and love letters her husband had given her since falling in love three years earlier.

The account also contained QQ Coins and virtual game equipment her husband had purchased.

Tencent refused her request to inherit the account and assets, stating that the company does not handle account and data inheritance.

"The right to use an account belongs solely to the original applicant. And this right shall not be gifted, loaned, rented, transferred or sold under Tencent's Terms of Service," the company said on its website.

Wang called the service centers of similar online services, such as Sina Weibo and Windows Live!, as well as commercial website operators like Taobao and online game operators like Blizzard.

All said they would neither obtain information from nor pass on the accounts of dead users, even to spouses and children. They said Chinese inheritance law does not cover the inheritance of virtual assets.

Rights to virtual assets after death have become a concern for many Chinese people who are putting more and more of their personal information into the digital ether.

Wang's case in particular triggered an uproar, with many criticizing Tencent for its "inhumane" treatment of deceased users and their families.

The Ministry of Industry and Infor-

mation Technology estimates that Chinese users had 390 million instant messaging accounts, 230 million social networking accounts and 190 million microblog accounts as of this June.

How to handle the inheritance of so much data is a topic that cannot be ignored, said Chen Gang, vice dean of the School of Journalism and Communications at Peking University.

The Internet has risen to popularity relatively recently – most heavy users have yet to reach middle age.

"However, Internet use is becoming an essential component of people's social activities. As users age, the problem of inheritance will become increasingly acute," Chen said. "What happens when a website goes out of business? Who should assume control of the photos and messages before they vanish?"

Yao Kefeng, an attorney at the Beijing Deheheng Law Firm, said that real accounts tied to a user's name, such as a bank account, cannot be inherited and used under the same name. However, accounts tied to a virtual name, such as a Taobao store, can be inherited and operated.

"The key question of Wang's case is whether a QQ account belongs to the former or the latter type," Yao said.

Yao said that people are becoming lazy about protecting their data, and advised users of virtual services to keep hard copies of their data and include the passwords to their virtual accounts in their wills.

Wills including virtual assets first appeared in the UK in 2006.

Some netizens sided with Taobao, stating that social networking websites should not grant permission for anyone to access a deceased user's account. "Protecting the user's privacy is also a way to show respect to the deceased," microblogger Lili Cat wrote.

Yao said China's laws remain vague about the protection of virtual property and fail to even define virtual assets.

China had more than 500 million Internet users at the end of last month.

Lost in the wild

Who should pay when hikers stray?



Rescue helicopter airlifts stranded hiker.

By Huang Daohen

Many people see weekend trips to the countryside as a relaxing and safe outing. But not every hiking and climbing adventure has a happy ending.

Amateur trekkers who begin their trips without proper preparations can easily end up injured or lost in the wilderness. Should the public be expected to bear the cost of their rescue?



Ill-prepared climbers cost Chinese cities hundreds of thousands of yuan each year. These climbers (above), stranded on the Siguniang Mountains, were taken to a Chengdu hotel after their rescue last Wednesday. CFP Photos

Who will pay?

October 12 was a big day for the 14 trekkers who ventured into a forbidden area of the Siguniang Mountains in Sichuan Province. After spending 13 days lost, they were rescued by local authorities.

Their celebrations were silenced when they learned they would face punishment and be required to reimburse the city for their rescue.

"They chose a forbidden route that authorities purposely closed off in June," Huang Jizhou, the head of tourism at the Siguniang Mountain Management Bureau, told the *Chengdu Evening News*.

Huang said the path had been seriously damaged by an earthquake and was in extremely dangerous condition.

On September 30, the team, including nine hikers from Guangdong, Zhejiang, Hubei provinces and Shanghai, as well as their local guide and four porters, entered the Siguniang Mountains using a route recommended on the Internet.

The group, consisting mainly of people between the ages of 21 and 35, chose the forbidden route in hopes of finding excitement, Huang said.

According to earlier report by *Chengdu Evening News*, the group camped at the Haizigou area of the mountain on October 1. Three days later, they hiked out as planned and were not heard from again.

On October 9, the Siguniang Mountains Management Bureau received a rescue request from the family of the guide, who was supposed to return on October 6.

Many hikers in the area have died or gone missing, so the bureau decided

to contact the local government to begin a rescue search. More than 1,000 police and rescue workers were called to active duty.

On October 12, the group was located in a village on the mountain.

"They were in good health and uninjured when our rescuers found them," Huang said.

The guide Tang Yanghua told local media that they didn't lose their way, but were looking for a new way out because the landscape had shifted since the quake.

Tang's statement was supported by team leader Xu Ning. Xu, a 35-year-old mountain climber from Hangzhou, who led another team into the area last year but turned back due to unfavorable weather.

The group is now being investigated, and authorities said they may face fines of 5,000 each, in addition to the 30,000 yuan owed for the rescue operation.

That 30,000 yuan includes 26,000 yuan owed to the Siguniang Mountain Management Bureau and 4,000 to the Sichuan Mountain Climbing Association, which also participated in the rescue, Huang said.

Authorities in the Siguniang Mountain area spend more than 300,000 yuan each year rescuing lost hikers.

Pursuit of excitement

The Siguniang hikers were one of many groups of adventure-seekers to disappear during the week-long National Day vacation.

On October 4, four hikers were reportedly lost on Taibai Mountain in Shaanxi Province. More than 20 local rescuers were dispatched to search for them, but only two were rescued, the *Xi'an Evening News* reported.

Statistics from the Beijing Emergency Rescue Center show the cost of rescuing stray and injured hikers grows every year.

Last year, as many as 130 rescue incidents resulted in the death of 40 people, most of whom adventured into mountainous areas that were offlimits. Half of the rescue operations retrieved hikers who merely "got lost."

Amateur trekkers are increasingly seeking out dangerous areas for their hobby, said Cai Wei, a former rescuer at Beijing Emergency Rescue.

"These well-off urbanites feel mobile and empowered once they own an automobile, so they decide to go off in search of 'excitement,'" said Cai, a veteran hiker and climber.

But there are reasons that the more famous mountains have established hiking routes. "Sometimes, the signs pointing out the dangers are so clear that young hikers deliberately ignore them," Cai said.

The center's data indicates that three of the top nine places where incidents occurred were at the famous tourist mountains of Songshan in Henan Province, Taibai Mountain in Shaanxi Province and Laoshan in Shandong Province.

Be prepared

Even a simple hike should begin with proper preparations, Cai said. "Safety comes first. After that you can have as much fun as you want."

Cai treks the mountains around the capital twice a month. Each time he sets out, he loads up a backpack with a compass, a GPS device, a map and a flashlight.

"Some young people don't even know how to use a GPS device and yet

they go deep into the mountains," Cai said. Many mountains, even in suburban areas, are not developed for hiking and have no signs to follow.

Cai said preparation is crucial for amateur hikers. One has to study survival skills either from books or the Web and read the weather forecasts.

But Cai said online channels pose serious risks. "When people meet on the Internet, they don't know each other well. Their teamwork is weak because most of them only care about the excitement," he said.

People also need to choose routes that fit their capabilities and, if possible, Cai said they should go with an experienced guide.

As for who should bear the financial costs of rescue, Cai said the country does not have well developed laws for outdoor management.

In many countries, such as the UK, hikers are required to send detailed plans of their routes, members and equipment to relevant authorities before setting off.

This makes their rescue effort more efficient and less costly, Cai said.

Zhou Wei, a professor with the Law School of Sichuan University, agreed. Zhou told local media that the country should enact stricter laws to govern such increasingly popular outdoor activities.

In the Sichuan case, Zhou said that the hikers avoided paying for their mistake by making a public apology. They avoided punishment because they technically did not break any laws.

"People should be expected to pay for their mistakes when their ill-planned outings require a costly rescue operation," Zhou said.

The next revolution is in fitness

While China, currently the world's second-largest economy, grows ever richer, its well-off citizens appear to want to get fitter, according to a *New York Times* report.

It may not always be apparent. A random visit to the capital's athletic fields at Olympic Square one recent afternoon revealed no joggers in sight, though a nearby McDonald's was doing brisk business.

Gyms in Dalian, Liaoning Province are empty most of the time, and rarely a cyclist can be seen on the bike lanes, which are clogged with cars.

The World Health Organization said that the obesity rate in some Chinese cities is close to 20 percent.

But the report found developments happening behind the scenes: a foundation for participation in amateur sports is growing.

Gyms, clubs and gear shops are also slowly seeing increases in customers.

The next revolution in China might belong to fitness.

(Agencies)

The third eye

Fitness revolution in the eyes of an expat journalist

Tom Sims, a New York Times correspondent in China, recently visited Dalian, a city of 6 million, and saw how local citizens are shifting their schedules to stay fit.

Wang Rui, 30, sits beside the pool underneath the Dalian Oriental Houston Hotel as several women swim laps.

As a child, Wang swam in the sea because there were few pools. Today, he can quickly name six public pools in the city, not including the hotel pools with general admission like this one.

Pools in Dalian can easily be filled with 200 people at any given time, he says, and swimmers must often wait their turn. Sun Lin, this pool's lanky lifeguard, says: "Compared to before, fewer people come to just talk."

Across town is Bally Total Fitness, a swanky gym in the heart of the financial district that opened nine years ago as a partnership between the local government and a US chain. It has 27 treadmills and machines that in quality stand up to those in the West. It is



More people are attending various sports activities to keep fit. Li Wenming/CFP Photo

mostly empty on a late afternoon, but Zhang Zifan, a marketing manager, says that it will fill up in the hours ahead.

A second Bally's has since opened. The two gyms count about 10,000 members, up from about 4,000 four years ago, despite costing 6,000 yuan a year.

Meanwhile, social clubs focused on sports are on the rise. Li Kai, a 26-year-old

lawyer, joined the Lawyer Associate Badminton Club three years ago. At the time there were 200 members. Today, the club has 500. A website allows members to schedule matches to play one of China's most popular sports.

Li likes badminton because it is "elegant," he says, and he plays the sport about six hours a week.

Li strolls through an underground athletic complex below the Sweetland Hotel, not far from Olympic Square. It is an enormous maze of badminton courts, gyms, bowling alleys and gear shops. Never mind that the Internet cafe was the most frequented spot one particular afternoon.

Li insists that China is getting fitter.

(The New York Times)

变动的社会

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Occupy Taobao

Vendors protest over e-commerce woes

By Huang Daohen

Tens of thousands of disenfranchised Americans have "occupied" Wall Street over the last few weeks to protest the country's high unemployment and other problems.

Now vendors at China's leading online marketplace Taobao are taking it to the next level. Many have been placing and canceling huge orders with their big-brand competitors and causing their rankings to plummet with negative feedback.

The raid, triggered by a Taobao policy change, may have exposed the belief of a level e-commerce market as a myth.

On the warpath

The "war" between small vendors and bigger business owners in the Taobao Mall, an online marketplace with 40 million users, 50,000 businesses and 70,000 brands, has not gone unnoticed.

In the past week, 50,000 people claiming to have small-scale businesses on Taobao Mall ganged up to sabotage the stores of larger retailers, taking out massive orders and clogging up the network with returns.

The returns also came with negative feedback, crushing the online sellers' ranking in the marketplace.

Many brand resellers have been affected, including those for the clothing chains GXG and Uniqlo, who sell more than 100 million yuan of clothing through the online mall each year.

Zhu Jingnan, manager of French dress shop GXG, said the vengeful purchases last week might cost the company 500,000 yuan in lost sales. But Zhu said he was more worried about the negative feedback, which could diminish his business' ability to compete.

Taobao said that more than 10,000 orders were returned to the large vendors on Wednesday night alone. On most days, the store sees fewer than five returns.

But the vendors were never the real target: Taobao was.

On October 10, Taobao announced it would increase its annual membership fee from 6,000 yuan to between 30,000 and 60,000 yuan. Its compulsory cash deposit would also be increased from 10,000 to as much as 150,000 yuan, effectively sweeping all small businesses off the site.

The price hike led many vendors to believe Taobao was in cahoots with the big name brands. Many met online to form an "anti-Taobao union" and raid the larger vendors.

Zhou Miaomiao, a small bags vendor from Wenzhou, Zhejiang Province, was among the participants.

"Though I can understand a possible increase, a 10-fold hike would shut me down," she said.

Jack Ma Yun, founder and president



A man walks past an advertisement for Taobao Mall

Kevin Lee/CFP

of Taobao's parent firm Alibaba, compared the protest to Nazis.

"I logged on to the Internet and saw people shouting Nazi-like slogans of 'Get rid of everything! Destroy everything!'" Ma said.

Ma's questionable understanding of Nazi slogans aside, Zhou said that Taobao's new policy is destroying not only the community of small vendors, but the very lifeblood that makes the Taobao marketplace so prosperous.

"It's truly unfair. We were the ones that helped Taobao prosper in the first place," Zhou said.

Zhou said she could never afford the new costs with the scale of her business. She plans to give up and close her store if Taobao insists on raising its fees.

To be delayed

But there may be some good news for vendors like Zhou.

Alibaba said Monday that it will delay the new fees and give small vendors a 9-month grace period.

The company also said it would invest 1.8 billion yuan in the Taobao Mall to help small vendors increase the scale of their business.

However, new vendors at the mall will have to pay the increased fees starting from January 1, the statement said.

Taobao's move may have less to do with listening to its users than listening to the Ministry of Commerce. The government authority, which has been active in encouraging small business growth, stepped in over the weekend and told Taobao to respond to its users.

The anti-Taobao union has also postponed its raids.

"Since the government has stepped in, we will suspend our attack. We believe the government will ensure our fair treatment," the union said in an online statement.

However, some small vendors were determined to continue their guerrilla raids on storefronts.

Growing pains

The temporary victory of the vendors could be bad for the industry.

Taobao's decision to raise its fees was

completely in line with market logic, said Kang Yan, a senior analyst at Accenture in Beijing.

Raising the access threshold at Taobao Mall would remove a lot of substandard and gray market stores.

"It is not only an effective measure to attract and hold consumers and users, but also provides an edge for future competition," Kang said.

Business-to-consumer sales in China totaled 54.2 billion yuan during the second quarter of this year, up 170 percent year-on-year, according to statistics from IT consulting firm Analysis International.

Taobao Mall, founded in 2008, accounts for 33 percent of the volume. It is trailed by 360buy.com and Amazon.cn.

But the site has long been known as a paradise for hawkers of counterfeit goods, Kang said. Quality problems and complaints about the service are legion, and media reports of fraud are the norm.

"The fee hikes will force small shops to focus on product quality and the services needed to create a sound commercial environment," Kang said.

If the move is so right, then why is Taobao being seen as so wrong?

Kang blamed its on the e-commerce industry's coming of age. The industry has been developing rapidly for 11 years and has an annual turnover of more than 4 trillion yuan.

But Kang said it is largely self-regulated. Relevant laws remain sketchy, and many areas of the industry are entirely ignored by the government.

The Consumer Protection Act, created in 1994, has no clause about Internet transactions. At the time it was written, the Internet as users understand it today hardly existed.

"When a dispute does make it to court, insufficient evidence and holes in the law ensure it will be thrown out," Kang said.

In Taobao's early years, Jack Ma acted as a moderator when disputes arose between Taobao's users and vendors. But as a businessman, Ma said he never found a solution that all the parties could accept.

Western Union expands agent network

By Huang Daohen

For those living and working in Beijing, transferring even a modest amount of money out of the country can be a confusing task.

That may change thanks to popular US money-transfer agent Western Union's large-scale expansion into the mainland market.

Western Union is cooperating with 12 domestic banks, including the Postal Savings Bank of China, the Agricultural Bank of China and China Everbright Bank, to double its agent locations to 32,000 across the country, said Drina Yue, Western Union's senior vice president for the Asia-Pacific region.

In 2003, the company had only 5,000 agents on the mainland.

"Thanks to the cooperation of local banks, our business extends throughout the provinces," said Yue, who made the remarks last Friday at a ceremony to mark the company's 160th anniversary and 16 years of business in China.

To transfer money via Western Union, the sender must fill out a remittance form at a local agency. He or she will be required to pay the amount to be sent, as well as the service fee, in cash.

The sender will then be given a Money Transfer Control Number, a key to guarantee the security of the transaction. Using this number, the receiver can pick up his or her remittance at any Western Union agent.

The service requires neither a bank account nor credit card. A valid photo ID is sufficient on both ends of the transaction, Yue said.

The company charges \$15 for transfers of between \$0.01 and \$500, and \$40 for amounts up to \$10,000.

Yue said money transfers in China grew 7 percent in the second quarter of this year due to increasing numbers of Chinese citizens traveling, working and studying abroad.

The company is adding more electronic channels for money transfer in addition to its current bank outlets, Yue said.

In July, the company teamed up with e-commerce giant Alibaba to create an online payment system for small businesses.

Under the deal, global consumers buying items on AliExpress, Alibaba's small-lot sourcing website, can make cash payments through Western Union agent locations across the world.

The cooperation, which combines high-tech online payments with low-tech wire transfers, is a coup for both companies, Yue said.

Should S2 trains allow bicycles aboard?

By Zhao Hongyi

Ask most locals and they'll tell you: trains are still the preferred way of travel around the capital. There's no risk of traffic jams, and the costs are still very manageable.

But heated discussions have risen recently over whether S2 trains, which depart from Xizhimen and go to Yanqing County in the city's northwest, should allow bikes onboard.

Opened in August 2008, the S2 line extends out to the suburbs via Badaling Great Wall. The price for one ride is 6 yuan.

The county, which is protected as a "natural reserve," has promoted tourism and sports recently, holding Beijing International Bicycling Tour Festival on June 18.

That event has spurred the interest of many cyclists. Every weekend, cyclists take the S2 train out to Yanqing for biking. BMW, or "bicycle-metro-walking," is very much a fad among young people.

But the line issued a notice just before National Day holiday saying bikes will no longer be allowed on the trains. The notice said this policy change was to protect the train's other passengers.

"The number of people taking our line is increasing," said Zhao Siheng, manager of S2 Xizhimen Station. "Our line carried more than 8,000 passengers during the holidays, more than twice the number as the previous year."

"Many young passengers used to bring bicycles with them to tour Yanqing, but they're not considerate of other passengers," Zhao said. "Some of them even ride on our station platform, ignoring the safety of others."

The notice was posted at the entrance of every station. Passengers are not allowed to take anything that exceeds 60 cubic centimeters in size of 20 kilograms in weight.

"The smallest folding bicycle is larger than this," said Wang Junqing, a cycling enthusiast. He wants to know why he can't even bring a foldable bike if the trains aren't full, like during weekdays.

The tourism bureau of Yanqing said they have no objection to the decision by the train company. "It's common practice," said Ma Jun, a bureau official.



Last week, authorities posted notices saying bicycles will be banned from S2 trains.

Photo by Alan Yuan

Comment

Spare a cabin to solve the problem

The prohibition inconveniences bikers and will have a negative impact on Yanqing tourism. The train should let us be able to take foldable bikes, at least, or spare a cabin for riders to use. We riders take full responsibility for any harm we cause.

— Cao Fei, cyclist

Holiday traffic is an exception, not a rule

I heard that people brought bikes onto the train platform during the holidays – that seems like a mistake. But I think the S2 line should

allow riders to bring small folding bikes aboard, especially because this suburban line isn't very full when it's not a holiday. It's only when it becomes as busy as downtown subway lines that we should consider a full prohibition of bikes.

— Tian He, Beijing Bicycle Tour Association advocate

Trains are for the good of all

The S2 line has allowed riders to take their bicycles aboard for three years. We should understand why it made its recent decision to change its policy. It is adopting the same rules as those in place for subway lines downtown. Bikers

can get to Yanqing via other means if they don't want to follow these regulations. The bottom line is, trains are for the public good, not the benefit of a small group of people.

— Wang Meng, commentator, Beijing Star Daily

I support the prohibition

I totally agree with the prohibition, because these bikers endanger the safety of others. The S2 line has seen an increase in passengers, and many of the riders don't practice self-restraint. Once harm is done, they'll just run away.

— Jin Tian, passenger

Debate of the week

National Museum says 'I do'

The National Museum denied over the weekend that its space is available for public wedding ceremonies after a newspaper reported a couple celebrated their big day on the venue's top floor.

According to *The Beijing News*, the wedding was approved by museum management because the couple works there and had applied repeatedly to hold the ceremony at their place of work.

The *Beijing News* reported the couple held a banquet on the fifth floor of the museum on Saturday, and cited unidentified staff members as saying the cost was 250,000 yuan.

But the museum insisted it has no floor rental service for weddings and that the Saturday event was specially approved.

It said visitors were not affected by the ceremony because exhibition halls are mostly on the first four floors and wedding guests used a separate elevator to reach the fifth floor.

This is not the first time the museum, which many think should represent the image of the state, has courted controversy.

It hosted a three-month exhibition on luxury label Louis Vuitton in late May, provoking a debate over whether a state museum should host such large-scale exhibitions for commercial brands.

Science song with easy lyrics becomes a hit

A chemistry-themed song, whose lyrics were written by the president of Peking University, has sparked wide debate on the Internet due to its colloquial lyrics and use of online slang.

Zhou Qifeng, head of Peking University and also a chemist, used words like "geilivable" – giving power – to make the song more accessible.

After the song, performed by a student chorus, was broadcast recently on China Central Television, it was quickly posted on a microblog and forwarded more than 20,000 times. It received more than 6,000

comments on Sina Weibo.

Zhou said in a lecture that he wrote the lyrics to motivate others to compose songs for the celebration of the International Year of Chemistry 2011.

Some netizens argued that colloquial lyrics combined with online slang make the song very approachable for ordinary people.

However, some criticized the colloquialism of the lyrics and expressed doubt in Zhou's writing ability, considering he's the head of Peking University, commonly believed to be the top school in the field of liberal arts.

Village shows off its wealth

A newly inaugurated skyscraper was seen earlier this month in Huaxi Village, Jiangsu Province. Known as the country's richest village, Huaxi celebrated its 50th anniversary with the inauguration of a massive 328-meter skyscraper that dwarfs all the other buildings in the area.

A solid gold bull, which weighs

1 ton, greets visitors at an observation deck on the 60th floor of the tower, a testament to the wealth of the village. In Huaxi, every family has at least one house, a car and \$250,000 (1.6 million yuan) in the bank, and enjoys health care and free education.



CFP Photo



French artist attached to Chinese ink and paper

By Zhang Dongya

Last Saturday, French artist Patrick Neu concluded his three-month exchange in Beijing by holding a solo exhibition inspired by Chinese culture at Yishu 8 Gallery.

Neu was the second of three artists from France to receive the Yishu 8 Prize, which was set up by the Association of Yishu 8 last year. In April, the association selected three artists to live and work in Beijing, hoping the city's energy would feed their creativity.

Neu, born in 1963, lives and works in Enchenberg in Lorraine in the northeast of France. Since the 1980s, he has been making sculptures using crystals, bread, lead, eggshells and beeswax. He has held dozens of exhibitions in France, the US, Switzerland and the Netherlands. He seldom titles his works or exhibitions because he says he wants to leave a space open for audience interpretation.

He came to Beijing in August, marking his second time in China. He said he wanted to do something he could never have done in France.

"I could never have imagined that one day, I would work in Beijing,

listening to crickets, which reminds me of my stay at the Villa Medici in Rome," Neu said.

At the exhibition, the artist displayed one of his favorite works – a series of paintings of irises, which was exhibited in the Nanterre Museum of Art in France in 2008.

He also showed three pieces he created in Beijing, featuring ink and paper. Two of the works used ink sticks as a frame, while the images inside were formed by naturally flowing ink.

"What I knew before I left was that I would absolutely look into the traditional media and tools of Chinese painting and calligraphy: ink and paper," he said.

During the three months, he visited several paper and ink factories in Anhui Province – the cradle of Chinese xuan paper and ink – and learned about the materials.

In the factories, he found that ink can be as soft as paste – a new material that is different from what he's seen in France, where ink is a liquid or come in the form of sticks.

He made a pistol sculpture with ink and embedded it into a xuan-

paper book. Neu said the ink pistol is a metaphor for the power of expression.

"Before people use ink to write or paint, the ink is just ink. But then it can turn into something powerful, even violent like a gun. You can use it to kill people or be killed," he said. "You can express yourself with the ink; meanwhile, the expression itself will be limited by the script or painting – that's why I use ink as a frame for the other two pieces."

At Hukaiwen ink factory in Huangshan, Anhui Province, Neu got help from workers to make his first paper sheet.

He also found himself captivated by the fragrance of ink. "I did not know that ink manufacturers were adding fragrant and therapeutic herbs," he said. "While he is preparing his ink, the artist can breathe in scents of mint or musk and get into the best possible mental state for creating."

Neu said the most important thing about the past three months is that he has gained a new understanding toward materials like ink and paper, which will surely influence his creations in the future.



Patrick Neu

Photos provided by Yishu 8 Gallery

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Chinese visa applicants to US tallies record 1 million

By Han Manman

The US embassy in Beijing said more than 1 million applications from Chinese citizens for US visas were processed in this fiscal year, up 34 percent from last year.

The applications were handled by US missions in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Shenyang and Chengdu, according to a report released by the embassy.

Figures from the US Department of Commerce also showed that more than 801,000 mainlanders visited the US last year, adding more than \$5 billion (31.9 billion yuan) to the US economy.

"The US-China relationship is profoundly important, and welcoming Chinese visitors to the US strengthens our cultural and commercial ties," said Gary Locke, US ambassador to China.

However, despite the ambassador's goodwill, mainlanders still complain of difficulties in getting a US visa, especially the long processing times.

Applicants have to wait as long as 60 days to secure an appointment at one of five US consular locations in China that process visas. There, they're often greeted by long lines, followed by a face-to-face interview that can end sometimes

only after a matter of seconds with a disappointing result.

"My business deal in the US was delayed for two months because of waiting for my visa. The delay made me lose nearly 100,000 yuan," said Cheng Hui, a local businessman. "I hope there's a way to improve the system, which will benefit not only us but also the US."

Currently, there are only about 100 visa adjudicators in China, creating a crushing backlog during the summer when tourists and students travel the most.

Recognizing the potential boost to American businesses, the new US ambassador has

pledged to make reducing wait times a priority.

"We know that if we want to strengthen our commercial relationship with China and create jobs in America we need to make it easier for Chinese businesspeople and tourists to travel to the US," Locke said in a speech last month in Beijing.

The ambassador said several efforts have already been made. While continuing to reduce wait times for visa appointments, the US consular services also expanded their hours, took on about a dozen additional staff and hope to have another 20 officers by spring. Several facilities are

also being expanded.

A high refusal rate is also a big point of frustration for mainland applicants.

"The visa officer just asked me some simple questions like whether I was married, what's my purpose for the travel. The interview lasted less than one minute," said Xu Ran, an applicant. "After that, I was told that my application had been rejected, but wasn't given an explanation."

Charles Bennett, minister-counselor for consular affairs at the US embassy in Beijing, said only 15 percent of applicants are denied, and there is no quota for rejections.

South Korean embassy in Beijing joins microblog craze

By Chu Meng

The Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Beijing launched its official Chinese microblog on Sina Weibo last week. It already has 42,000 fans.

Ambassador Lee Kyu Hyung said the microblog will give details about his official schedule in China and announcements from bilateral or multilateral summits, embassy news, cultural exchange programs such as language courses and movie exhibitions, and tourism information.

In a two-minute video posted last Thursday, Lee gave a welcome speech in Chinese

to netizens.

That is the microblog's most popular message so far, garnering 66 comments. A netizen called "Korean Kimchi" wrote, "If there's a 100-point scale for ranking foreigners' Chinese speaking skills, the ambassador would get an 86."

"The general public is the important part of the bilateral relationship, and I hope the microblogging service will become a platform for communication between the embassy and ordinary Chinese people, especially youngsters and political scholars," Lee said in a statement.

The British embassy

became the first foreign embassy to launch a Chinese microblog in November 2009, and several other embassies have followed suit, including the US, France, Australia and the EU. The UN News Division also has a Chinese microblog.

"My colleagues in the Delegation of the European Union to China and I have become fans of China and the Chinese people, so I am happy to invite you to become our fans," Markus Ederer, EU ambassador to China, posted in his first message on March 29.

The US Embassy launched

its microblog at the end of last May, and now has nearly 34,000 fans.

The US also gives live reports of official activities. Ambassador Gary Locke's popularity among locals owes in part to the transparency of his public messages. Because of the comments section, the public also feels like it can communicate directly with the ambassadors.

Other microblogs use tags to establish personalities. The Danish embassy adopted "high-quality food," "innovation" and "fashion," while the French embassy associates itself with "romance."



Screen shot of the Korean embassy's microblog

LIVE FOR THE MOMENTS



COSTA COFFEE

Young expats create alternative art space

By Annie Wei

On a cool autumn afternoon, people who walked by the glass door of Homeshop, a hutong house, could peer inside to see people taking naps or playing guitar.

Walk inside and they'd be more amazed at the spacious hutong bungalow, which has a large courtyard with many smaller rooms.

Two small dogs run around the courtyard while a cat sleeps under a small stool.

"The dogs belong to a friend who lives in the [nearby] Fangjia Hutong," said Elaine Ho, an artist and designer from the US and co-founder of Homeshop.

Homeshop counts six core members who have rented the space together, and another 10 to 12 members frequently use the space.

Rent is not cheap: in addition to splitting the rent, Homeshop also charges eight freelancers between 600 to 1,000 yuan per month.

"All our work is related to creation: art, design, translation, theory and movies," Ho said.

Six years ago, Ho came to Beijing thinking she'd only stay for one month during the summer. But there was more to do here than she anticipated.

In 2008, she rented a 20-square-meter room in the hutong. Like Homeshop, it was decorated to create a connection between the space and its surroundings.

Ho published articles and



Photo provided by Homeshop.org

A post in front the Homeshop attracts curious neighbors to walk in.



Calendar Restaurant is a Homeshop member's project.

Photo provided by Emi Uemura

books about her local community. Her first book was published before the Olympics, with articles and photos of hutong residents.

"I think most of what we did was event-based," Ho said.

Ho has made many friends over the years, and all of them need a space to work on their projects. Renting a bigger space together meant being able to help one another, she said.

All of Homeshop's resi-

dents are freelancers. "People in mainstream society look for things in their life through a job, but we look for those things through different products," Ho said.

After returning from a trip to the south, during which Ho and her friends worked in an exhibition called "A museum that is not" at Guangdong Time museum, Ho realized that Homeshop is also an alternative art

space that weaves together the lives of locals.

Homeshop's agenda is all about being involved in the local community.

"We would like to take steps to get to know our neighbors," said Ho, who has interviewed many of them.

Future projects include setting up a library in the front room, where anyone can borrow books or tools.

Ho said she can't define the target audience for Homeshop, but knows it's a space where people can explore the relationship between daily life and art.

Emi Uemura, from Japan, is also a core member of Homeshop. She and her friend, local magazine editor Fang Danmin, host a monthly event called Calendar Restaurant at Homeshop.

Calendar Restaurant invites people to come together, cook and experience a slow-food meal while discussing the relationship between food and lifestyle.

Networking organization soliciting donations for annual event

By Annie Wei

For many expats, the International Newcomer's Network (INN) is their first guide to living in a new environment.

It has helped newcomers settle into the community for a decade, and its annual Afternoon Tea event raises funds for several charities.

The group recently announced that this year's Afternoon Tea event will happen on November 28 at the new Temple Restaurant, with holiday entertainment and raffle prizes.

The beneficiaries of this



Beijing Huiling is an 11-year-old community service program for people with learning disabilities.

Photo provided by Beijing Huiling

year's proceeds include Beijing Huiling, Bethel Foster

Home and Magic Hospital. INN is asking the commu-

nity to donate raffle prizes for this year's lucky draw. Donations can be anything from cash to goods and merchandise to gift certificates.

The suggested value is at least 1,000 yuan, though the group will also take donations that are worth at least 500 yuan. Gift certificates should be redeemable without purchase requirements and should have a validity period of at least six months.

People should confirm their donations before November 15 by filling out a donation form. Email innbeijing@hotmail.com for more information.

Event

Halloween Party

This Saturday, The Familier is offering an entire afternoon of Halloween-themed games, art and activities. It will be serving an assortment of holiday treats as well. Bring the family and your costumes and prepare for a spook-tacular Halloween. Please reserve in advance. For more information, contact service@thefamilier.com or 5869 2904.

Where: The Familier, Chaoyangmen Wai SOHO, Chaoyang District

When: Saturday, 2-5 pm

Email:

echo_cai@thefamilier.com

Cost: 100 yuan for adult and 50 yuan for child

Green Cow Harvest Festival

It's harvest time! Come celebrate at the Green Cow Organic Farm. Activities will include a pumpkin-rolling contest, coffee-sack race, corn relay, three-legged race and tug-of-war. Snack on artisan foods and learn broom-making, thread-spinning, cloth-weaving or stone-grinding corn.

Where: Donggezhuang, Houshayu Zhen, Shunyi District

When: Sunday, 11 am - 4 pm

Email: thelovelygreencow@gmail.com

Cost: 50 yuan

Indian cooking class and screening

This Sunday, the global tour of the senses stops off in India. Chef Sridevi will take you on a culinary trip to explore the mystery of Indian cuisine and learn to cook delectable dishes that she learned while growing up in Andhra Pradesh. The movie *Monsoon Wedding*, an award-winning family drama about arranged marriages in modern India, will be screened afterwards.

Where: 1 Jiudaowan Zhongxiang Hutong, Dongcheng District

When: Sunday, cooking class starts at 4:30 pm, screening at 7 pm

Email:

thehutong@gmail.com

Price: 240 yuan (200 yuan for members) for cooking class and screening, 35 yuan for screening only.

(By Wei Xi)

Foreigners advised to get local flu vaccine

By Zhao Hongyi

The municipal health bureau ordered its 449 affiliated clinics and community hospitals to begin giving flu vaccines on October 15. The service will be available until the end of November and free to children younger than 18 and elders older than 60.

The new vaccine protects against ordinary types of flu and also carries antibodies for both N1H1 – a type of flu from 2003 – and H1N1-A, otherwise known as swine flu.

The vaccine also has antibodies against H1N1-B, a relatively new flu that has spread around the world in the past few years.

“The new vaccine developed this year functions against a number of ordinary and variant flus,” said Zhao Chunhui, deputy director of the municipal health bureau. “And the vaccine is very effective, as determined after experimental injections last year.”

Zhao said she doesn't expect this season's flu virus to undergo mutations and cause another epidemic.

The cost for adults will be less than 100 yuan. The health bureau has ordered all clinics and hospitals to provide injections

during work hours every day of the week.

The bureau estimated, based on statistics from previous years, that 1.6 to 1.7 million citizens will receive the vaccine.

Citizens should bring a form of identification, such as household registration card, ID card or passport, to receive the injection. People can visit bjhb.gov.cn or call 12320 for a list of which hospitals and clinics offer the shots.

Those who go for the vaccine will first receive a general inquiry and check-up. After the injection, people are required to stay for 30 minutes in case of an adverse reaction.

Those who are allergic to eggs, have a fever or suffer from Guillian-Barre Syndrome, a type of neuritis, are advised not to get the vaccine.

Many foreigners are reluctant to get vaccinated, but doctors advise them to do so.

“Foreigners under 18 and above 60 are strongly recommended to receive the vaccine,” Tian said.

Adults and elders must bring their passports to the clinics and hospitals. Some popular locations include the



Children under 18 can receive free vaccine shots before the end of next month.

Photo by George Frey/GettyNorthAmerica/CFP

Recommended locations

Peking Union Medical College Hospital
Tel: 6529 6699 / 5284
United Family Healthcare Hospital
Tel: 5927 7000, 8047 5432
China-Japan Hospital
Tel: 6422 2973, 8420 5001
Sanlitun Community Health Service
Tel: 6416 5682

Love me, love my pet



Some pet owners want their pets to be happy, which means finding their soulmates.

CFP Photo



The Apple App for pet dating

By Chu Meng

Animal lovers know that a pet can be a best friend. Bonds between pets and their owners can be so strong that they even affect the relationships the owners might have with other humans.

With that in mind, pet-dating-oriented social networks are taking shape in China. A variety of social sites seek to help pet-lovers accomplish two goals at once: find a loving animal, and a loving person – possibly in that order.

Some sites go one step further and help animal breeders find the right match for their pets.

One such application is Pet Dating, a Chinese-developed Apple App Store app that was released in March. It was developed by Auto Han, founder of Honor Water Company, and has English and

Chinese versions and is compatible with the iPhone, iPod Touch and iPad.

“It's built around pets and relationships, but dedicated to bringing pets and people together,” Han said. “We intend to make it a Facebook for animals, which can enlarge people's social circles in a different and fun way.”

The App allows users to share tips and resources for their furry friends. Once users create an online profile for their pet, they can search for pets that have similar interests or are the same breed. People can set up play-dates and romps in the park. Members can also use the site to share advice and even help find missing pets.

Popular discussions include feeding advice, health instructions and travel plans with pet buddies.

The App also provides a platform for pet owners to share “pet dating” tips.

Bu Hong is the owner of an 18-month-old male purebred Samoyed. She is looking for a mate for her dog.

“Professional pet stores charge an arm and a leg to find a mate,” she said. “While online mating stores are hard to trust, I'd like to give this pet social networking application a try in order to find my dog a soul mate.”

But like purchasing from online auction sites or making friends on Renren and Facebook, there are risks, Bu said.

“Say, for instance, pet stores and hospitals download and use this application,” she said. “Then they would affect individual users' choices, or they could exploit the system to make money.”

Audible lumps

Hear the colors of Guo Feng

By He Jianwei

Bringing together paintings and music is nothing new, but Guo Feng might be the first to create both for his exhibition.

As one of China's pioneers of pop, Guo has several records to his name. In 1986, he invited more than 100 pop singers to join him in singing "Filling the World with Love" and organized one of the mainland's first pop concerts.

But most people are unaware that he learned painting while studying in Japan in the late 1980s.

This Saturday, he will present his first solo exhibition at China Shijian Contemporary Art Center. Each piece has an accompanying original musical composition.



Guo Feng and his self-portraits

"Music is my work and painting my hobby. They are like two streams in my life that have come together in this first solo exhibition."

Guo's studio is an apartment located two stops from Guomao. It does not look like a typical musician's studio. The balcony and kitchen are buried in old paintings, and his latest work is drying in the living room.

The studio contains the bulk of his recent paintings, from which 100 were selected for the exhibition.

Guo was born into a musical family and began studying piano at the age of three. When he was 14, he released "Moonlight," his first song. Four years later he became the youngest member in the history of the Chinese Musicians Association.

His first famous song was "Filling the World with Love," created for the International Year of Peace in 1986. It was the first pop song in the mainland, and was sung by 28 singers.

Hong Kong held a concert that same

year to celebrate the International Year of Peace. More than 60 singers from Hong Kong and Taiwan performed Luo Dayou's "Tomorrow Will Be Better."

Today, the two songs are staples of benefit performances for people living in struggling areas.

But prior to his trip to Japan in 1988, Guo's life had little to do with painting. During his studies, he heard news that the French impressionist painter Pierre-Auguste Renoir's work sold at auction for 400 million yen (33 million yuan).

"Before I went abroad, my income was only 40 yuan per month. That was something many Chinese students had to overcome when studying abroad. If I could sell a painting for only 40,000 yen (3,300 yuan), it would dramatically improve my life," Guo said last Friday at his studio.

Although he had not received professional instruction, Guo had some experience with oil paints.

He became fascinated with oil painting when he saw his brother's painting of silver birches. "It was magical. From up close, it didn't look like anything. When I took a few steps back, it became a clear and vivid forest," he said.

With his brother's help, he first picked up a brush and began creating realistic oil paintings of flowers and landscapes. The first piece he sold was a rose that earned him 50,000 yen (4,200 yuan).

When he left Japan, he sold most of his paintings for between 100,000 and 800,000 yen (67,000 yuan) for each. The rest he sent to his friends and family.

"Painting was just a way for me to make a living. I only kept two of my early paintings," he said.

In the early 1990s, he gave up drawing and concentrated on his music in Singapore.

He returned to China in 1995 to promote pop, but became disillusioned by

rampant piracy in the mainland market. That disillusionment worsened with the growth of the Internet in the late 1990s. "Most people download music from the Internet; few actually buy any albums. The traditional music industry is dead," he said.

Unable to make a living on music, Guo returned to painting in 2000.

Rather than paint purely commercial pieces, Guo began the search for his own style. After seeing many exhibitions presented by Chinese contemporary artists, he found that those born in the 1960s and 1970s expressed repression through their paintings.

"I could not derive pleasure from any artist's work. Not only the visual arts, but also literature was polluted by this disillusionment. As part of the generation most affected by the Cultural Revolution, I can appreciate its importance as a theme – but surely there must be joy

somewhere!" he said. Guo began to experiment with painting lumps of color as a way to express hope.

"It's a good thing I'm not a professional painter, because some of my color schemes are absolutely taboo," he said. "Sometimes, I juxtapose the most clashing of colors, such as peach and gray."

The people in his paintings have no special facial features, and the figures are made up entirely of colors. The same stylistic choices affect his portraits of politicians, musicians and painters, many of which were selected for the exhibition.

"You cannot find their eyes, noses or mouths, but you can still recognize which is Beethoven and which are the Beatles," he said.

Guo's paintings project pure and tranquil atmosphere. In digest, a lone, small figure stands before an expanse of land. "Some of my friends said the

work made them feel lonely, but I see it as inspiring hope. When I see a boundless desert or broad ocean, I imagine there must be a paradise on the other side," he said.

His progression from early realism to current abstraction is part of his appreciation of minimalism.

"My experience with pop music showed that simple melodies are timeless. My song 'Filling the World with Love' has been enjoyed by several generations because it lacks a complex structure," he said.

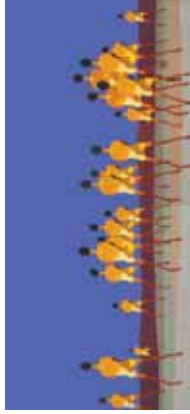
The exhibition includes improvised piano music for each piece. The compositions are three to five minutes in length. The songs are played through a headset placed in front of each painting.

"Music is my work and painting my hobby. They are like two streams in my life that have come together in this first solo exhibition," he said.



Puzzle

Photos provided by Guo Feng



Watching



Mask



I Wanna Fly



Tomorrow

Guo Feng Color Lumps

Where: China Shijian Contemporary Art Center, 9 Fuxing Lu, Haidian District

When: October 22-30, daily, 10 am – 6 pm

Admission: Get a ticket by sending a message to 3103 for China Mobile users and 10600309 for China Unicom and China Telecom users

Tel: 5980 2233

The 20th century through a family's eyes

By He Jianwei

In reading Han Suyin's autobiography *The Crippled Tree*, Welsh philosopher Bertrand Russell said, "During the first of many hours that I spent reading it, I learnt more about China than I did in a whole year spent in that country."

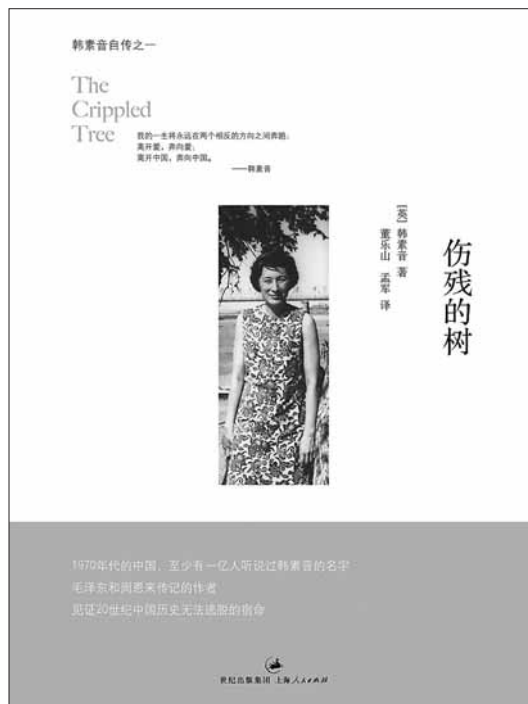
The Crippled Tree is the first volume of Han's four-volume autobiography published in 1965. Forty-six years later, Shanghai People's Press has released its first Chinese version on the mainland, translated by Dong Leshan and Meng Jun.

Spanning the years from 1885 to 1928, the book begins with the life of Han's father, one of the first students sent abroad by the Qing imperial government to study engineering in Belgium. It depicts how her father met and married a Flemish Belgian, how he returned to China and gave birth to her in 1917.

"It is not only an autobiography, but a record of my family's life and the environment that formed my characteristics, and a revelation about the relationship between China and Europe during the early 20th century," Han wrote.

In addition to her family's story, Han covers the historical events of the early 20th century and how these events influenced her family.

Former Premier Zhou Enlai and his wife Deng Yingchao encouraged her to write the books when she returned to China in 1956. They talked with her many times to encourage her to tell



The Crippled Tree
By Han Suyin, 466pp,
Shanghai People's Press,
49.8 yuan

English readers about Chinese modern history.

But as late as 1961, she remained uninspired, believing that European readers were too removed to appreciate a book about China's history and a Chinese family's life.

An American publisher asked her to write about her mother's life in China, but Han was not interested. She said

her mother should not be the focus of an autobiography.

She began writing her autobiography in 1964 and completed the fourth volume in 1979.

Han is famous among European and American readers for her historical studies of Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai.

"I once asked 10 well-educated French people which contemporary Chinese writer they had read. Nine of them told me Han Suyin," the writer Liu Xinwu said.

Trends Lounge book listing

Located at The Place, Trends Lounge is a bookstore and cafe with a wide selection of books about international art, design and architecture.

Ancestral Realms of the Naxi: Quentin Roosevelt's China

Edited by Christine Mathieu and Cindy Ho, 224pp, Arnold-sche, 525 yuan

This book is a comprehensive introduction to 1,000 years of Naxi culture, art and religion. It presents the objects of the Quentin Roosevelt Collection, the most complete collection of Naxi Dongba art.



Edward Weston: The Form of the Nude

By Amy Conger and Edward Weston, 160pp, Phaidon, 480 yuan

This book is a collection of American photographer Edward Weston's nudes, still-life and landscape art. Born in Illinois in 1886,



Weston achieved success as a commercial photographer, shooting portraits in the popular soft-focus style of the time.

Advanced Textiles for Health and Well-Being

By Marie O'Mahony, 256pp, Thames and Hudson, 330 yuan

This text is an authoritative and comprehensive survey of the latest developments in high-tech textiles. From medical implants to space fabrics, advanced textiles have the potential to transform human habitats and transportation, protect the environment and support personal health and well-being.

(By He Jianwei)



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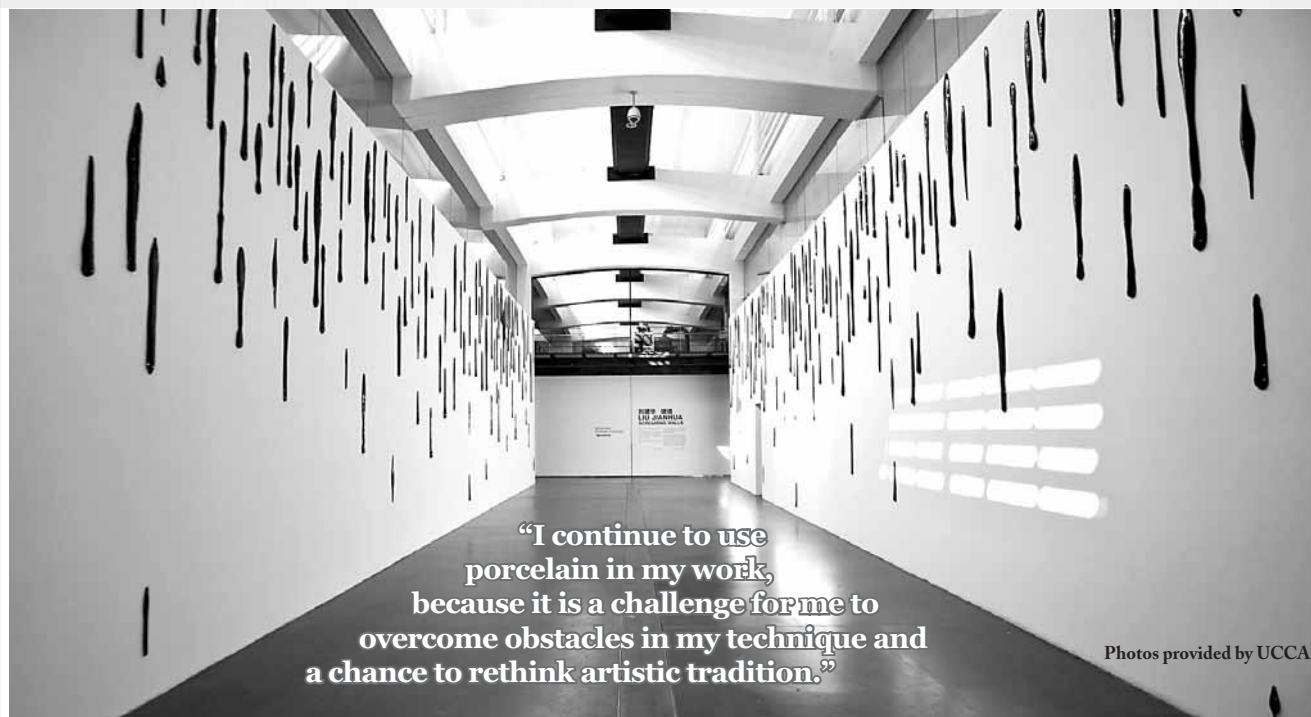
with Porcelain a modern message

By He Jianwei

Although China has a long history of using porcelain, it continues to be seen as a folk art.

Leading ceramicist and installation artist Liu Jianhua is the first to introduce this medium to the contemporary art scene.

In the past decade, Liu has adopted the traditional material to represent modern issues, such as urbanization and breakneck development.



"I continue to use porcelain in my work, because it is a challenge for me to overcome obstacles in my technique and a chance to rethink artistic tradition."

Photos provided by UCCA

More than 200 pieces of black porcelain drip down the walls of the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA)'s exhibition hall. The raindrops are part of Liu's latest work, *Screaming Walls*, which was created specially for UCCA.

UCCA Director Jerome Sans named the piece while curating the exhibition. Standing in the corridor, Sans felt like the black porcelain resembled tears. "Even though the work was still, I felt like the walls were crying when I stood in the corridor," Sans said.

But Liu sees the porcelain as ink droplets and the two white walls as sheets of paper.

"I previously wanted to call it 'Traces.' These ink stains represent traces of the human mind and imprints of the soul. I hope people feel find them soothing after leaving the noise of the real world," Liu said.

"In the end, I took Sans' suggestion. Maybe viewers with no knowledge of calligraphy will see it as he did."

The exhibit is an adaptation of "water stains on the wall," an idiom that describes the highest form of Chinese calligraphy. It was supposedly coined during a conversation

between two calligraphers of the Tang Dynasty (618-907).

One day, Yan Zhenqing, whose signature Kai script revolutionized Chinese writing, asked the young monk Huaisu, a master of wild cursive, how he found inspiration for his style.

"I observe the summer clouds that resemble mountains with spectacular peaks, and I imitate that impact in my writing," Huaisu said. "Nature is my inspiration. Some of my calligraphy is reminiscent of birds in flight or snakes slithering into the bushes."

"What about water stains on the wall?" Yan asked.

Today, the phrase refers to finding one's inspiration in organic and natural phenomena.

Last October, Liu decided to create a new piece that would adhere to this traditional aesthetic. At the end of February, he began firing his porcelain in Jingdezhen, Jiangxi Province, the capital of ceramic production since the Song Dynasty (960-1279).

After many experiments, he finally created a kiln-fired black porcelain.

"The long, raindrop-like object breaks easily when fired at a high temperature," he said. "I worked with

fellow ceramists for almost six months to find a way around this problem."

Born in 1962 in Ji'an, Jiangxi Province, Liu became a ceramist at Jingdezhen Pottery and Porcelain Sculpturing Factory at the age of 14. After studying with senior masters for eight years, he became a skilled worker.

"I knew that I was on a road that would leave me working in a factory forever like those old masters. That's why I started studying for the college entrance exam in the early 1980s," he said.

After three attempts at the exam, he was admitted to the Department of Fine Art at the Institute of Ceramics in Jingdezhen to study sculpting in 1985.

"When I received the letter of admission, I sent all my old tools back to my friends at the factory. I never imagined I would need them again," he said.

In college, he used plaster, steel and fiber-reinforced plastics to create art.

But porcelain remained his most familiar material. "No other contemporary artists of the early of 1990s made porcelain. They never mastered the skill," he said.

He first became known for his brightly-colored, headless and armless female torsos that were placed in sexy poses and covered in traditional dress. The series came to symbolize China's attempts to attract foreign investors after the economic reforms of the late 1970s.

His works often deal with interpretations of China's role as the world's factory, and his installations and sculptures include assembly lines, mountains of electronic waste and broken porcelain fragments.

"I continue to use porcelain in my work, because it is a challenge for me to overcome obstacles in my technique and a chance to rethink artistic tradition," he said.

Liu Jianhua: Screaming Walls

Where: Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA), 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until November 20, daily except Monday, 10 am – 6 pm

Admission: 15 yuan, 10 yuan for students

Tel: 8459 9269

Local brands going chic



ZUO'AN corn fiber T-shirt, price to be decided



ZUO'AN sweater, priced to be decided



Hongjingtian series



Organic coix seed serum, 428 yuan

By Annie Wei

This week, *Beijing Today* introduces two brands: Ba Yan Ka La, a natural skincare line, and ZUO'AN, an apparel brand.

Ba Yan Ka La is founded by Frenchman Jean Zimmermann. He uses special Chinese herbs and essential oils to make basic skincare products like shower gels, soaps, shampoos and conditioners. Prices range from less than 100 to 500 yuan.

The brand has gained local organic certification.

Zimmermann said a doctor of traditional medicine helped him design product series like water lily seed, wolfberry, mulberry and hongjingtian (rhodiola, a plant with health effects).

Hongjingtian is recommended because the herb is known for having anti-aging properties and not many skincare products have incorporated this ingredient.

The ingredients are mainly from south-east China, with products manufactured in Guangzhou.

A series consisting of a bottle of shampoo, conditioner, facial cream and soap starts at 800 yuan.

Li Tian, senior editor of *Target* magazine, endorses Ba Yan Ka La's products. "They are mild," she said, as most natural skincare products are. That also means it may take a while to see results.

We also like its soap package: the bars are wrapped in brown paper and tied with fine hemp rope, like bags of Chinese medicine.

Two years ago, local freelancer Nasi introduced the brand on her blog and mentioned its store in Shanghai. While the brand is available in boutique hotels like The Opposite House in Sanlitun, few customers have heard of it. Last month, it entered the store Brand New China as its exclusive skincare brand.

We also appreciate ZUO'AN's inexpensive items. A wool sweater can be bought for less than 700 yuan.



ZUO'AN wool sweater, 675 yuan

CEO and chief designer James Hong focuses on original and environmentally friendly designs. In its up-and-coming fashion show next Wednesday during Beijing Fashion Week, people will see ZUO'AN's new products made from eco-friendly ingredients.

There's a polyester men's suit made out of recycled water bottles. There are T-shirts made from biodegradable corn fiber, replacing polyester.

Hong plans to take his brand into the international market. "I think European buyers prefer unique brands with good materials and concept," he said, based on his experience at international apparel trade fairs such as WHO's Next.



Synergy essential oil, priced to be decided



Wolfberry handcream, 75 yuan

Ba Yan Ka La

Where: B.N.C, B1-LG9A,
The Village North, 19 Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District
Open: 11 am – 8 pm
Tel: 6416 9045

ZUO'AN

Where: Chongwenmen
Department Store, 3-5,
Chongwenmen Wai Dajie,
Chongwenmen District
Open: 10 am – 10 pm
Tel: 6708 1605

Photos provided by
Ba Yan Ka La/ZUO'AN

New seasonal cocktails at Maison Boulud

By Annie Wei

Looking for a good cocktail? Posh places in Sanlitun and the central business district might immediately come to mind, but here's an alternative that might be better, and for a similar price: Maison Boulud.

Yes, the high-end French place with the incredible ambiance and service isn't just known for its food. From lunchtime until late at night, it also offers a fine selection of fancy drinks.

Every six weeks, chef Brain Reimer, manager Nicolas Socquet and head bartender David Ding release new cocktail menus featuring 10 homemade drinks.

"They are all made with the best ingredients we can find in the country," Reimer said.

Try the blueberry gin (80 yuan), which gets its berries from a local farm. It has a lovely ruby and purple color and a well-balanced taste. Imagine if you could drink the scent of Body Shop's passionberry lip balm.

The fig bourbon (80 yuan) is made with figs from southern China. It's currently in season and is a must-try, as you won't find this drink anywhere else in town.

Also good is the Quebra Tudo (80 yuan), with Gramham's 6 Grapes Port, Cointreau, lime juice and plum tequila. It's like Sangria with Portuguese wine in it.

This month's top recommen-

dation, however, is the Beijing Derby (98 yuan), made with fig-infused bourbon, cranberry juice and champagne. The strong bourbon is lightened by the juice and champagne. A bit of vanilla and cinnamon gives the drink a cupcake scent.

The drink menu retains classic cocktails as well. Project 23 (80 yuan) has been on the menu ever since Maison Boulud opened. Many people enjoy it because of its unique flavor.

"Its main attraction is the slightly spicy flavor from Sichuan pepper," Ding said. "When you drink it, you'll get the hint of a woman's fragrance due to ingredients like ginger and coriander."

Ding recommended a softer version of lychee martini – Guifei Smile (80 yuan), which uses Belvedere vodka and is less dry than most martinis.

Guifei refers to the famous concubine Yang Guifei (719-756). Du Fu wrote a famous poem about her, saying how she loved lychees and forced the emperor to send people to southern China on their fastest horses to get lychees for her.

The restaurant offers car services at all times.

Maison Boulud

Where: 23 Qianmen Dajie, Dongcheng District

Open: For cocktails, noon – late

Tel: 6559 9200



Absinthe martini, 80 yuan



Quebra Tudo, 80 yuan

Picking wines right

By Annie Wei

Alice Chan, a popular Taiwanese cartoonist, sat in a hutong restaurant recently with friends and compared Beijing's wine scene with Taiwan's.

Beijing has lots of options – take cheap table wines that start at 60 yuan, for instance – but Chan and her friends looked down on expensive wines because they were suspicious of storage conditions at supermarkets. They also found supermarket salespeople to be annoying.

"They're paid by wine distributors," said Marc Fresange, CEO of Oh Marco Cellar Chain China. "Most of them don't know about wines. Their wages are from commissions on sales."

A few simple questions can help you figure out if the salesperson knows the wines or not, Fresange said. Ask about grape variety and the best year for drinking the wine.

"You can also ask if the salesperson knows the producer or if he has tasted the wine himself," Fresange said.

"When you know the wine business, you know that the big supermarkets like Carrefour and Wal-Mart oblige their suppliers, so there's a good chance to get a value wine like a Bordeaux Grands Crus," he said.

Fresange said salespeople should work for 30 months in a cellar before they can provide sufficient information for customers.

Recommended autumn selections from Fresange's Oh Marco Cellar:

Reds:

Cote du Rhone 2009, Remy Ferbras (Syrah, Grenache) 158 yuan

Lacarelle 2009 Beaujolais AOC, 338 yuan

Cote de Nuits Bourgogne 2007, 522 yuan

Panigon 2003 Medoc Cru Bourgeois, 388 yuan

White and rose:

Pample Rose (pinot noir avec grape fruit juice, best-seller), 148 yuan

Riesling Marcel Hugg Riesling AOC, 228 yuan

Chablis 2009, E Chandesais, 532 yuan

Oh Marco / Cafe du Centre

Institut Francais de l'Ambassade de France, Gongti Xi Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 8 am – 8 pm

Tel: 6553 2627

Oh Marco Cellar, Fortune Mall

7 Dong Sanhuan Zhong Jie, Chaoyang District

Open: 8 am – 10 pm

Oh Marco Jin Rong Jie (Oh Marco flagship store)

Where: 9 Jinchengfang Jie, Xicheng District

Open: 10 am – 10 pm

Tel: 6622 0566

For direct sales, please contact Ouh La La (free delivery for orders up to 500 yuan) at 5879 0210



Riesling



Chablis



Pample Rose



Melon julep, 80 yuan

Photos provided by Food and Wine magazine

Photos provided by Ouh La La

By Wei Xi

Music is his life. He lives in a world of harmonies and melodies. Not many people know him, but those who have heard his songs become instant fans.

He is He Guofeng, an offbeat balladeer.

The pursuit of a musical life

With graying hair and a washed-out jean jacket, 36-year-old He – whom everyone calls Xiaohe – looks more like a street performer than a renowned musician.

We met two days after his album *Silly's Ballad* was released, yet if He was feeling giddy about his accomplishment, he didn't show it. He sat in a corner and spoke in a quiet, nonchalant voice.

He does not care about how big his fan base becomes. If it were up to him, he'd prefer a smaller audience: only those who really appreciate his music. That's why he chose to release his album in hardware form rather than on a CD or digital download.

"Songs on CDs or tapes are easily pirated, while this special album prevents songs from being copied" he said. "So, if anyone wants to listen to these songs, they have to do it from this player."

He said digital downloading has made songs very easy to access, which means they aren't likely to be cherished by their listeners. He does not want that to happen to his ballads, which he made with painstaking effort.

He also believes songs can have different meanings to different people. Listeners are meant to immerse themselves in his album,

free from outside distractions. The only instrument He plays is the acoustic guitar. His ballads are more about instrumentation than lyricism, however. The music is simple and pure.

The album cover includes a picture of 12 leaves that He drew in Zurich last year. "Every morning when I went out for a jog, I would collect leaves," said He, who used to study fine arts. "Back home, I picked 12 of them and used them to tell a story. I drew a sketch of each with color markers."

He's ballads may seem simple on the surface, but dig in and they'll tell stories that can be interpreted in different ways by different people.

He, born in Hebei Province, was a juvenile delinquent who always got into fights. His parents sent him to the army in the hope that he would learn some discipline.

What the army really taught him, however, was that music would be his vocation.

"I liked both music and painting when I was little, but when I enrolled in the army, playing the guitar was more suitable for the community," He said.

In 1995, at the age of 20, He came to Beijing after his discharge. For him, the city was a wonderland where he could realize his musical dream. "During the early 1920s, most of China's rock bands were from Beijing," he said. "And my dream was to become a

rock 'n' roll star."

He worked odd jobs to support himself, including as a janitor at a shopping mall and a security guard. Later, he got a job at an instrument store.

Eventually, He founded a rock band with some of his friends. "It was at that time that I practiced a lot on the electric guitar," he said. "I even had a fight with a man sleeping on a top bunk because he said my music was awful. My pride was hurt."

After more than a year in Beijing, He moved to Changsha in Hunan Province after a friend told him that its performers were paid well.

But it turned out that the grass was not greener on the other side. He wound up at a local bar singing for paltry pay.

"One of my fellow players, a drummer, had to sell his pager just so he could eat," he said.

But He looks back at these years as times of true happiness because "I could pursue music for one simple reason: I liked it," he said. "Now I have many more considerations."

In 1997, he returned to Beijing and switched from rock music to ballads.

The rock scene, at that time, had become dominated by technically proficient musicians who lacked soul, He said.

Believing that music quality mattered more, He put down his electric guitar and began playing acoustic. In the early



CFP Photo

years, he wrote a lot of songs about himself, but his themes have evolved as he's matured.

"When I was young, I always thought about big questions about life, dreams, spirits," he said. "Now I have a broader view and consider small, more practical issues."

These simple songs, however, leaves space for listeners to contemplate more worldly issues.

About his success, He said, "There will always be someone who will eventually discover your talent."

And his dreams for the future?

"I hope I can live without a cell phone," he said. "I hope when I reach the age of 60, I can still do what I want to do and sing what I want to sing."



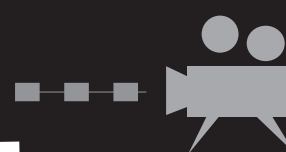
Silly's Ballad

Xiaohe performing at Chaoyang Culture Center during Mid-Autumn Festival.

Photo provided by U Studio



“Return to your roots.”



Where one's heart belongs

By Zhang Dongya

Many Chinese people have a special attachment to their hometowns and yearn to return when they grow old.

Vasily, a descendant of a Hebei Province native living in a Russian village in Hulun Buir, Inner Mongolia, searches for his father's hometown in *Seeking Roots*, a documentary screened last Saturday at Moma Broadway Cinema.

He is just one of many people whose identity was shaken by a massive migration of Han Chinese people into the traditionally non-Han lands of northeastern China that took place during the twilight years of the Qing Dynasty and the Republic of China.

Bai Junjiang followed Vasily's journey and recorded his story as a way to document this historic population shift that is today being forgotten.



Vasily (right)



Director Bai Junjiang

Bai, a 53-year-old native in Inner Mongolia, grew up on the banks of the Argun River, which separates China from Russia.

He knew Vasily as a boy.

Vasily, 67, appears obviously foreign with a high nose and blue eyes, but he speaks Chinese with a strong Hebei accent.

His father, Sun Qichang, left Hebei Province in 1916 when he was 16. He followed what was then a massive tide of migration, as people from across the country flocked to northeast China to eke out a living in the industrial boom towns.

Sun went to Galawan, a small village on the banks of Argun River, where he married a Russian girl named Katusha.

Their son was given the Russian name Vasily and declared to be ethnic Russian. The Russian ethnic group is recognized as one of China's 55 ethnic minorities and has a population of 13,000. Most Russian-Chinese live in the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, though a few live in Heilongjiang Province and Inner Mongolia.

Sun never returned to Hebei Province during his life, but mentioned the family's origins to Vasily on his death bed.

"We are natives of Hebei. We had a yard with three rooms when I left. Go back and look for our old family and our home. You should know your roots."

In Galawan, Vasily lived as a Russian under the influence of his wife and mother. But his father's words had left him wondering and desiring to know more about the Chinese half of his family.

Bai moved away to Shenzhen in 1997. During one of his trips back to Inner Mongolia for Spring Festival, he struck up a conversation with Vasily about his roots.

"[Vasily is part of] a group of people with a special identity in China and a product of a historic shift. The group uses two languages, two writing systems and



celebrates the festivals of two peoples. I wanted to record their history and culture, which is vanishing today," Bai said.

As a photographer, Bai had limited experience with video work. He bought some equipment and drove to Galawan Village from Shenzhen in 2008.

On the way, he was stopped by a serious snowstorm in the Greater Hinggan Mountains during winter. The snow was almost half a meter deep and came above the knee in some areas. He attempted several more trips with Vasily over the next two years as they searched for clues.

Vasily found an old man named Ivan who was 100 years old in the village. Ivan told him that Sun had come from a village called Wuzhuang in Funing County. Vasily found Funing on a map later and learned it was located northwest of Qinhuangdao, Hebei Province.

He made up his mind to head for Funing. Bai followed Vasily and his wife as they boarded a train from Hailar to Beijing and stopped in Beidaihe. They stopped in Funing County first to ask about Wuzhuang, and learned that the village was divided into East Wu and West Wu: only West Wu had people surnamed Sun.

Bai recorded their search for this strange place, and the conflicts between Vasily and his Russian wife.

In the end, they found Wuzhuang and met a cousin, who was the only family member left who remembered anything about

their fathers.

Vasily said it was the first time in 66 years that he had eaten dinner "at home."

He took a handful of loess from the family's ancestral grave to sprinkle on his father's grave by the Argun River.

When asked how his work had affected the search, Bai said he did his best to record a search that was mainly conducted by Vasily and his wife.

Parallel to Vasily's story, the documentary records the search of Warri, a pure Russian and friend of Vasily's.

Warri divorced his wife and lived with his two daughters. Though he hoped to remarry and have a son, he eventually gave up. He drowned his sorrows in hard spirits and wept at the border stone separating China and Russia.

Warri never realized his dream to search for his roots. He died of a heart attack at 58 in 2010 when Bai returned to Galawan last year.

Seeking Roots won first prize in the long film category at the First Chinese DV Competition in August, as well as the award for best cinematography.

Where to see documentaries:

Where: Library at Broadway Cinematheque, T4 North Area, Contemporary Moma, 1 Xiangheyuan Lu, Dongzhimen Wai, Dongcheng District

Getting there: Take Subway Line 2 to Dongzhimen and walk to Moma

When: 6 pm every Saturday
Tel: 8438 8257 ext. 8008
Admission: Free

Cultural border town retains its traditional ways

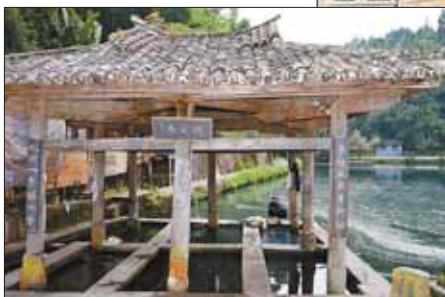
By Han Manman

For big-city dwellers, small ancient towns are always fascinating, but it's getting harder to find them these days as they continually succumb to "commercial renovation."

But the border town of Heshun in western Yunnan Province is one that has retained many of its old characteristics. Visitors enter via weatherworn footpaths and see shacks that serve as shops and time-frozen lakes. Walk around and you'll be transported into the past.



CPF Photo



Locals washing clothes at a traditional pavilion



Stone gamblers



It was a misty morning. All was quiet all over except for the sound of barking dogs. Cheng Tai rose early, as he usually does, but this time he was fulfilling a promise to show around some new guests at his inn.

Cheng is a gaunt middle-aged man. He used to be a teacher at a university in Guangdong Province, but he moved here three years ago after stumbling upon the town and falling in love with it. He rents his house, which he uses as an inn for tourists.

Whenever a guest comes, he volunteers to be their guide.

Walking on meandering stone paths through a maze of alleys, Cheng said, "I've been to many places around China, but Heshun is unique. I have a strong desire to stay here."

The name Heshun means peace and harmony, deriving from a verse describing "the rising clouds that herald an auspicious future and the gentle breeze that breathes peace and harmony."

Like its name, everything here is simple, and life is slow-paced.

Thousands of traditional residential houses have retained the architectural style of the Ming and Qing dynasties. They are in a tight array at the foot of a mountain along the riverside. One can reach out and touch living history, it seems.

This is an ancient town with very deep cultural roots. Many well-known Chinese literati were born here, such as the philosopher Ai Siqi, whose ideas influenced generations of people starting in the 1930s.

There are many ornamental structures along the road such as pavilions, archways and lotus ponds,

where egrets call home.

Some old women sell pickled vegetables and rice noodles outside the town's library, an elegant building with tiled roofs and upward-turned eaves that combine local and foreign styles.

Cheng said locals are very proud of this library, the first and largest village library in China – built of stone and wood – when it was completed in 1928. More than 10 percent of the books are considered rare, which is why scholars travel tens of thousands of miles to see them.

The library was constructed using donations from local merchants and Heshun people who had settled in Myanmar.

"Back then, transportation was very poor. If donors wanted to transport books from Shanghai by land, it took about two months. They had to transport the books to Myanmar by ship and then use horses to carry them here. It took about two weeks," Cheng said, adding that Heshun residents love reading and more than half of them have library cards.

A traditional pavilion lies on the bank of a river, where several women are seen washing their clothes.

"That is the clothes-washing pavilion," Cheng said. It was built by men who wanted to give women shelter while they washed their dishes or clothes in the stream.

These pavilions have witnessed lots of sorrow and hardship, Cheng said.

Back in the old days, parents in Heshun encouraged their children to go to neighboring countries such as Myanmar and India as traders, where they could make a better living. Most worked in the jade trade. Some returned, while others were never seen again.

Continued on page 21...



Cheng Tai



Locals have kept their traditional ways of living. Photos by Jiao Peng



Farmers working in wheat fields.

Photos by Jiao Peng

...continued from page 20

"If you have a daughter, don't let her marry a Heshun man, because the groom will leave his hometown soon after he gets married," Cheng said, humming an old ballad. "The poor bride will live as a widow day after day, year after year."

"Even now, half of the town's inhabitants have yet to return," he said.

Heshun was the center for jade trade in ancient times. Trading jade is a risky business, though. It's difficult to determine the quality of uncut jade, so buyers never quite know whether they'll gain a fortune or lose their savings. They only find out after they try carving their purchase.

This tradition has been passed on to today's merchants. Customers who dare to buy a stone know they're engaging in a calculated risk. One tourist spent 800 yuan on a small stone but discovered that it wasn't worth nearly that much after it was carved.

The shop owner, however, pointed to a photo on the wall and said proudly, "That was taken in 1993, after I won a high-quality jade worth well over 800,000 yuan."

My travel companion, Jiao Peng, asked, "But why is your shop so small and sleazy if you have so much money?"

"For gamblers, you can make millions overnight, and lose it just as quickly," he said, pointing out that he's experienced the highs of winning and also the lows of losing.

There are many museums also

worth visiting, such as the War of Resistance museum. During World War II, Tengchong County, where Heshun is located, became western Yunnan's primary battlefield against Japanese invaders. The Chinese Expeditionary Army made Heshun its headquarters to organize counterattacks. Today, at the site of the command headquarters, the museum immortalizes Chinese soldiers with their surviving memorabilia, while the fallen rest in a nearby cemetery.

"After so many years, the town still looks like before," Cheng said. "You would really need to stay for months to see all this place has to offer. Even three years hasn't been enough time for me to savor the entire town."

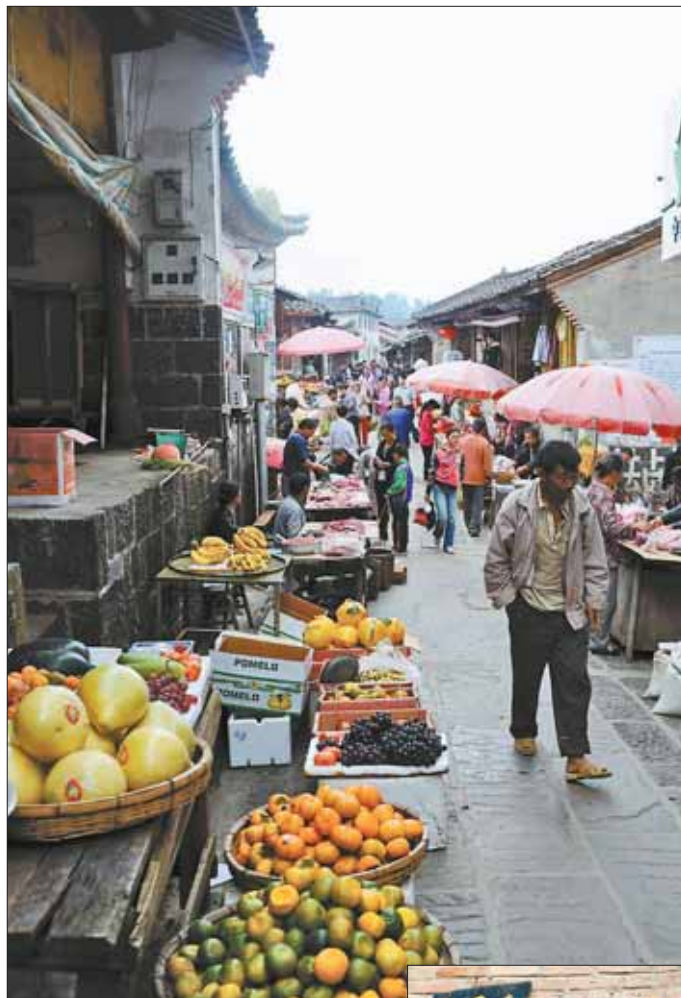
Other destinations

Here are some other places in Tengchong County worth visiting.

Beihai National Wetlands Reserve

An hour's drive from Heshun, this is the only natural wetlands reserve in Yunnan. Rowing a boat through the wetlands gives visitors a great view of verdant fields dotted with purple irises. Water fowl will sometimes fly out of the grass. As winter approaches, flocks of migratory birds can be seen arriving here.

Some visitors like to bring rubber



A market where you can find local specialties

boots to tramp across the grass. This singular experience makes one feel like sinking amid a "grassy raft."

Volcano Park

Tengchong is one of the most famous areas in China because of its volcano clusters.

In the volcano park, a 40-minute drive from Heshun, there are eight well-preserved volcanoes. The most famous is Daying (Beat Hawk) Mountain, which sits in the middle part of the county and has erupted many times. At 2,614 meters, it is the tallest conical volcano in the area. More than 70 smaller volcanoes of different sizes surround Beat Hawk Mountain.

The Hot Sea

Tengchong is recognized as one of the three major geothermal areas in China, and is the only place where volcanoes and geothermic energies coexist in the country. There are many spas distributed around this region.

The most famous scenic spot is called "Big Boiling Pot," a basin-shaped pond that measures 6 meters in diameter and 1.5 meters deep. The temperature at the pond's bottom is 97°C, causing the water to simmer day and night year-round. Local residents like to steam eggs, taro and



A modern bar street in an ancient town

sweet potatoes in the surrounding vents and sell the creatively cooked food to tourists.

How to get there: Fly from Kunming, capital of Yunnan Province, or take a 10-hour bus to Tengchong County. From the airport or bus stop, it's 20 minutes by taxi to Heshun Town.

Accommodations: There are various inns in Heshun decorated in traditional styles. During non-peak-travel season, it costs between 50 and 120 yuan per night to stay at an inn.



Flocks of ducks can often be seen in the early morning.

A mockup of a perfume designer.



Maestro of the nose

By Chu Meng

Perfume designers are the super noses of the fashion world.

Like a composer carefully positioning notes on a page to create a symphony, perfume designers carefully arrange a bouquet of scents to inspire the imagination.

All are born with superhuman smell, able to sense even the slightest variation among the thousands of scents found in nature and memorize and use them like precision instruments. They create the commercial fragrances that set trends.

For many years, the bulk of all perfumes have come from Europe – especially France and Italy. But the booming luxury market has made it possible for a few Chinese fashion fans to turn their gifts of smell into a career.

In Europe, fragrance has long been used by all ranks of society as a symbol of passion and sensuality. However, in China, fragrance was only used by nobility and during religious services.

Many people point to Cleopatra of Egypt as the creator of modern perfume. The queen used alcohol to extract herbal essences for later blending. Her use of the aromatic water on her clothing and boats left a deep impression on Rome after her visits.

Even today, most perfumes are still created from raw essence blended with alcohol and distilled water. The variety comes from the blend.

"There are more than 3,000 essences collected from nature," said Ricky Zhao, one of China's first modern perfume designers.

Zhao is a trainer working for Hermès' perfume division in Beijing. "In order to create new products, a perfume designer has to memorize every scent and know how to make them interact."

Zhao said a perfume designer is an expert at creating perfume compositions. Becoming an expert means mastering olfactory art and understanding the abstract concepts and moods conveyed by each composition of scents.

The world today has about 100 perfume designers, only six of whom have exclusive contracts with brands such as Chanel, Dior, Guerlain and Hermès.

Born in a village in Jiangsu Province in 1979, Zhao spent his childhood moving from one place to another with his family because of poverty. His family settled on the outskirts of Shenzhen when he was 18, and he found a part-time job assisting a fragrance extrac-

tion institute.

He soon found that certain aromas could improve his mood, and he began studying the essences and how they affected human emotions.

In 2006, he landed the chance to study at the Institute of Superior International Perfume in Versailles in France from one year. That experience led to his current position at Hermès.

At the most introductory level, a perfume designer must have a keen knowledge of a large variety of fragrance ingredients and their smells, and be able to distinguish each when it is presented in combination with other fragrances.

At the medium level, experts must know how each ingredient reveals itself through time and body temperature, and how mixed ingredients can influence each other or be influenced by environmental changes.

"The job of a senior level perfume designer, a 'super nose,' is very similar to that of a composer," he said. "The super nose mixes scents in imaginative ways for commercial production. It requires a sharp insight into current fashion trends."

In order to collect inspiration, most perfume designers spend 300 days traveling the world to experience remote or exotic life. "Like a poet, you have nothing to write about if you only stay home," he said.

In 2008, when Indian style

was identified as the new trend by Hermès perfume division, Zhao was called on as the only Asian scent designer to create its "Indian Garden" perfume series.

He flew to India and spent two months traveling the country to listen to folk songs, study handicrafts and visit the aromatherapy masters at bazaars, workshops and temples.

"Each time I found an ideal essence, that was when the difficult part of my job came. I would have to purchase a large volume of the product, and try to learn which plants and herbs the essence was made from," he said.

The job becomes even more complicated when the selected essence turns out to be a mixture of several raw materials. He then has to identify each element and the percentage that is present.

For this task, he works with chemical analysts to test different raw materials for their components and possible toxic effects on the human body. "If it turns out to be safe, we purchase either the essence products or herbs from India and bring them back to the Beijing lab for more serious work," he said.

Back in the office, Zhao spends two months creating at least five fragrances with slight distinctions. A senior perfume evaluator selects the final samples according to their popularity and acceptability in target markets.

The final decision-maker is the division director. When a design is approved, the production crew begins work on the perfume's color, its bottle and its packaging.

It is often said that olfactory memories formed during childhood are among the strongest. Zhao grew up in a poor family, and the flowers, grass and trees of the surrounding fields substituted for toys. His sense of smell was always very accurate, and he had a gift for remembering scents.

And as a child, he often went to the market with his mother to shop for food.

"We didn't have refrigeration, so my mom would ask me to taste sauces, flavors, salted vegetables, nuts and fruits to determine their freshness. If I made a face, she knew that the food would spoil within a day and she would pass it up," he said.

When he began to work in the lab, he had no experience in perfume creation. "My impression was that you collected flowers and leaves, put them in alcohol and then you mixed them. I learned all the steps only while experimenting and studying," he said.

Modern perfumes are increasingly complicated, and many designs overlap, he said. A successful and timeless perfume design should be comparatively simple.



Guerlain, the world's first bottle of commercial perfume, was created by doctor and chemist Pierre Francois Pascal Guerlain in 1828.



Ricky Zhao



Coco Chanel created Chanel N°5 in 1921.



Hotel

Swissotel suites put luxury within reach

Traveling for business or pleasure? Experience luxury in Swissotel Beijing's suites during your next stay.

Swissotel combines Swiss hospitality with contemporary design, personalized service and enhanced amenities. Enjoy a separate living area and the comfort of your own suite. It's ideal for business meetings, dinner parties or private entertainment.

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Suite Promotion: Save 20



percent on the best available rate. Exclusive suite benefits include executive Lounge privileges, complimentary breakfast, complimentary Wi-Fi in suite, fitness center access and early check-in or

late check-out, subject to availability.

Where: Swissotel Beijing, 2 Chaoyangmen Bei Dajie, Chaoyang District

When: Until December 30

Kerry Club life indulgence

The newly renovated club rooms and suites create a sense of privilege and a comfortable home-away-from-home experience.

This offer includes one-way hotel Wi-Fi-enabled limousine transfer with airport butler service; 30-yuan food and beverage credit usable

at any of hotel's outlets; in-room wired and wireless Internet access; and complimentary mini bar (excluding hard liquor and wine).

Club privileges include full use of the Club Lounge, buffet breakfast, all-day refreshments and snacks including ice cream, an exclusive selection of

evening cocktails and canapés from 5:30 to 7:30 pm.

Where: Shangri-La's Kerry Center Hotel, Beijing, 1 Guanghua Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until February 29, 2012

Cost: from 2,288 yuan per night

Tel: 6561 8833

Dinning

Oktoberfest at Hopfenstube German Restaurant and Brewhouse

Come and celebrate Oktoberfest at Hopfenstube German Restaurant and Brewhouse.

Enjoy unlimited servings of four beers, including a special Oktoberfest brew, created by house brew master Tobias Palmer. Enjoy a four-course set dinner of dishes from Bavaria. The night includes live entertainment by an Oktoberfest Band flown in from Germany for the week! Be sure to reserve your table early.

Where: Crowne Plaza Beijing Chaoyang U-Town, 3 Sanfeng North Area (southeast of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), Chaoyang District

When: 6:30-10:30 pm, October 25-29

Cost: 288 yuan (includes set menu and unlimited house beer and soft drinks)

Tel: 18001323282



White truffles at Aria

In keeping with executive chef Matthew McCool's "classic and innovative European" cuisine, Aria is offering a special mushroom and truffle-themed menu in November.

Tempt your taste buds with seared scallop and foie gras pate with truffles, agnolotti with wild mushrooms and truffles and David Blackmore's 9+ sirloin roasted with truffle. White truffles make the ideal complement to a soft, warm winter menu.

Where: Aria, China World Hotel, 1 Jianguomen Wai Dajie, Chaoyang District

Tel: 6505 5838

Email: fbreservations.cwh@shangri-la.com



Rent

3-bed apartment in Yuanyang Residences, near Sanyuanqiao

This apartment is located in the heart of Lufthansa Business Circle, southeast of Sanyuanqiao by the third embassy area.

The modern and classy unit is newly renovated and includes three bedrooms and two bathrooms. It is 193 square meters and high enough to offer a great garden view.

Tel: 13910511877

Email: lily@homes0.com.cn



Huge 5-bed sky villa in the CBD area

This five-bedroom villa is located in Oriental Rose Garden on East Fourth Ring Road by the China Central Place, CCTV New Tower and CBD area. The complex neighbors a Carrefour hypermarket.

The villa is located on the top floor and has an excellent view. It has five bedrooms, a study room, three bathrooms and two storage rooms. Rent for the 350 square meter unit is 28,000 yuan per month, including heating and management fees.

Tel: 13693294779



Jeep Cherokee available for rent

This advertisement is for a Jeep6420E Cherokee that is available for rent for personal travel within Beijing.

The vehicle is in good condition and fully insured. Its last annual inspection and tune-up was this May.

The Jeep has a 2.5-liter, 4-cylinder engine and new tires.

Monthly rent: 3,500 yuan (with maintenance, insurance and inspection)

Rental period: 12 months.

Tel: 13910037939



(By Jackie Zhang)

Fri, Oct. 21

Movie

Cassandra's Dream (2007)

This Woody Allen thriller is about two brothers in London who become mortal enemies after scheming to alleviate their finan-

cial difficulties by turning to crime. One is a chronic gambler in severe debt, and the other is a young man in love with a beautiful actress he has recently met. Their lives become entangled in a sinister plot with intense and unfortunate results.

Where: China Film Archive, 3 Wenhuiyuan Lu, Xiaoxitian, Haidian District

When: 7 pm
Admission: 20 yuan
Tel: 8229 6153

**Nightlife
Zhong Lifeng's Album Release Concert**

Folk artist Zhong Lifeng released his fourth album, *As Sad as Love Affair*, this month. He and his band Borges will perform songs from the album. Zhong draws

his inspiration from film and literature and sings about undying love, nature and humanity.

Where: The One Club, Building 5, 718 Art and Culture Zone, 19 Ganluyuan, Gaobeidian Bei Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 7:30 pm

Admission: 80 yuan advance purchase, 100 yuan at the door
Tel: 51290 082

Sat, Oct. 22



Nightlife

Temple of the Nomad

Founded by two musicians from Australia and the UK, this band has traveled to more than 60 countries playing guitar and flute. They are currently on their second tour of China, featuring 30 performances in Kunming, Chengdu and Beijing.

Where: Jianghu Bar, 7 Dongmianhua Hutong, Jiaodaokou Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: 9 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6401 5269

Nightlife

The Clippers Band

Founded in 1995, this Taiwanese rock band fuses the old music of Taiwan with modern-day funk and disco rhythms. Its album *Turn on the Discoball*, released in 2000, was selected as one of the top 50 albums from Taiwan in the past 100 years by Taiwan-based English-language magazine *Fountain*.

Where: Gulou 121 Bar, 121 Jiu Gulou Dajie, Xicheng District

When: 9:30 pm

Admission: 40 yuan advance purchase, 50 yuan at the door
Tel: 8404 3430

Movie

The Battle of Love (1957)

This is Eileen Chang's first script produced in Hong Kong. The story depicts a rich young woman who toys with men. When her cousin proves impervious to her charms, she weaves a web of seduction, even temporarily netting her sister's object of romance.

Where: Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA), 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 7 pm

Admission: 15 yuan, 10 yuan for students
Tel: 8459 9269

Sun, Oct. 23

of a Peking Opera theater, Han struggles to adapt to a life of retirement. He ambles along streets and finds a group of amateur opera performers in a street park, and with them decides to set up a troupe.

Where: Broadway Cinematheque, 2/F Building 4, north section of Museum of Modern Art (MOMA), 1 Xiangheyuan Lu, Dongcheng District

When: 4 pm

Admission: 40 yuan

Tel: 8438 8202

Movie

For Fun (1993)

Adapted from Chen Jian-gong's novel, this film depicts the life of a retiree named Old Han. As the gatekeeper



Mon, Oct. 24



Drama

The Lobbyist

Directed by Lin Zhaohua, this historical drama is his last chapter of the Spring and Autumn Period Trilogy. It is about lobbyist Zi Gong from the Spring and Autumn Period (770 BC-476 BC), who advocates peace among kingdoms but whose efforts end up unleashing war.

Where: Oriental Palace Theater, 47 Longfusi Jie, Dongcheng District

When: 7:30 pm

Admission: 80-480 yuan

Tel: 8408 5551

Tue, Oct. 25

Exhibition

The Anatomy of Rage

This exhibition presents the works of multimedia artist Lu Yang. It is curated by her teacher, Zhang Peili, who is a pioneer of new media in Chinese contemporary art. Lu uses video, scientific drawings, illustrations and installations to address topics related to science and technology, biology, religion and psychology. In this exhibition, Lu juxtaposes scientific principle and religious belief by grafting the brain's "anger center"—the mechanism by which the brain perceives and expresses negative emotions—onto a Buddhist deity. She proposes the question of



whether it is possible to maintain compassionate thoughts when one's face is contorted in anger.

Where: Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA), 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

ang District

When: Until November 20, daily except Monday, 10 am – 6 pm

Admission: 15 yuan, 10 yuan for students

Tel: 8459 9269

Wed, Oct. 26

Exhibition

Door and Lock

This exhibition presents Zhang Yexing's latest paintings, which focus on empty interior spaces. He paints walls, floors, ceilings, doors, drawers and boxes in a room. Some present a solemn sense of history, while others depict a simple yet peaceful scene.

Where: 01100001, 215 Caochangdi Village, Chaoyang District

When: Until November 22, daily except Monday, 10 am – 6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 5127 3204

Thu, Oct. 27

Movie

Agora (2009)

Set during the Roman Empire, this Spanish historical drama is about a slave who turns to Christianity in the hopes of pursuing freedom. He also falls in love with his master, Hypatia, the daughter of the director of the Museum of Alexandria.

Where: Broadway Cinematheque, 2/F Building 4, north section of Museum of Modern Art (MOMA), 1 Xiangheyuan Lu, Dongcheng District

When: 8:40 pm

Admission: 40 yuan

Tel: 8438 8202



(By He Jianwei)